

The objective of this report is to provide education and increase awareness in the Nashville community about the local drug overdose epidemic.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Suspected Fatal Drug Overdoses

Number of Overdose Deaths: During the first quarter of 2022, there were 173 suspected drug overdose deaths that occurred in the county, representing a 7% increase compared to the same time period in 2021.

Fentanyl: Seventy-nine percent of overdose-related toxicology reports in 2022 have detected fentanyl, a synthetic opioid pain reliever that has been the main driver in the increased number of drug overdose injuries and deaths in Nashville.

Polysubstance Epidemic: The most frequently detected substances among suspected overdose deaths in 2022 have been fentanyl, methamphetamine, and cocaine.

Demographics: Seventy-seven percent of suspected drug overdose deaths occurred among males while the largest percentage of deaths have occurred among 35-44 year olds (27%).

Suspected Nonfatal Drug Overdose-related Emergency Department (ED) Visits

Number of Overdose-related ED Visits: During the first quarter of 2022, there were 527 suspected drug overdose-related ED visits captured by syndromic surveillance (definition on page 3), representing a 7% decrease when compared to the first quarter of 2021, where 568 visits were reported.

Drug/Substance Category: Sixty-one percent of overdose-related ED visits in 2022 involved non-heroin opioids followed by heroin (32%) and stimulants (7%). This finding indicates a continued shift away from heroin and towards synthetic opioids and stimulants in Nashville.

Demographics: Approximately 7 out of 10 drug overdose-related ED visits in Nashville were among males. By age group, 33% of drug overdose-related ED visits occurred among individuals 25-34 years old.

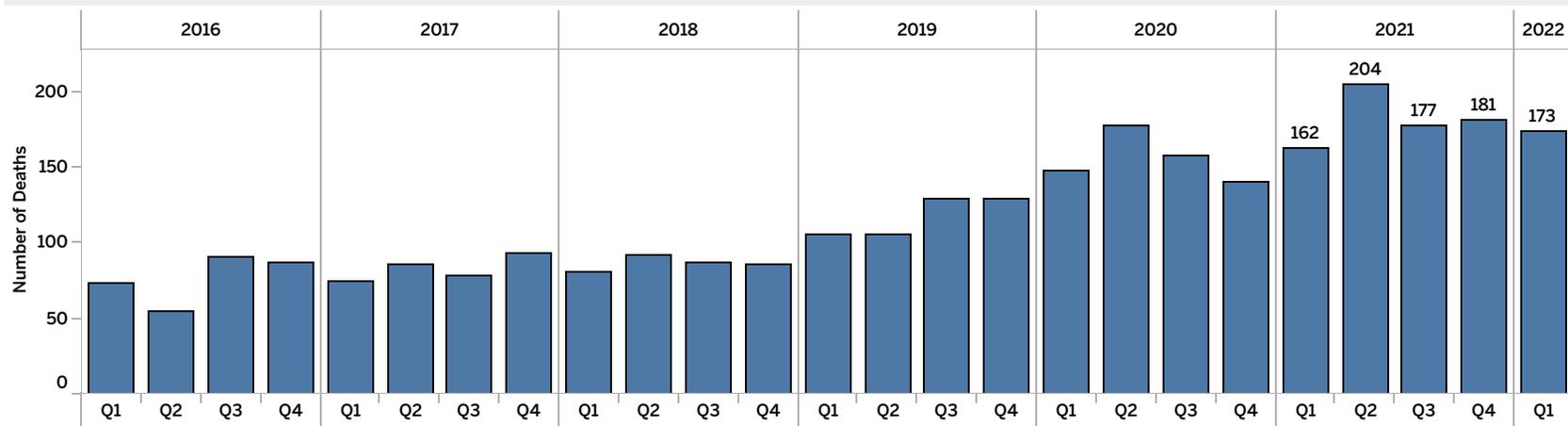
Suspected Drug Overdoses Requiring Response by Nashville Fire Department Emergency Medical Services (NFD-EMS)

Number of Suspected Overdoses Requiring NFD-EMS Response: During the first quarter of 2022, there were 1,279 suspected drug overdoses requiring NFD-EMS response, representing a 1% decrease compared to 2021 where 1,295 incidents were reported during the first quarter.

Naloxone Administration: Among suspected drug overdoses where naloxone was given, 30% of incidents during the 1st quarter of 2022 required multiple doses; during the 4th quarter of 2021, 34% of such incidents required multiple doses of naloxone.

Demographics: Approximately two-thirds of suspected drug overdoses in Nashville were among males. This trend has remained consistent over the last several years. By age group, one-third of all suspected drug overdoses occurred among individuals 25-34 years old.

Suspected Fatal Drug Overdoses by Quarter, 2016-2022 - Davidson County, TN



Note: Data pertaining to suspected drug overdose deaths are not currently finalized (including incidents occurring between January-March 2022). This information will be updated in subsequent reports. These data represent deaths accessed from the Death Investigation and Decedent Information Database that are suspected to be drug overdose-related. Further, these deaths have occurred within Davidson County; cases are included in this total regardless of resident status.

Suspected Fatal Drug Overdoses

2022 | January 1-March 31

Notable Trends

Overdose Deaths: During the first quarter of 2022, there were 173 suspected drug overdose deaths that occurred in the county, representing a 2% increase compared to the same time period in 2021.

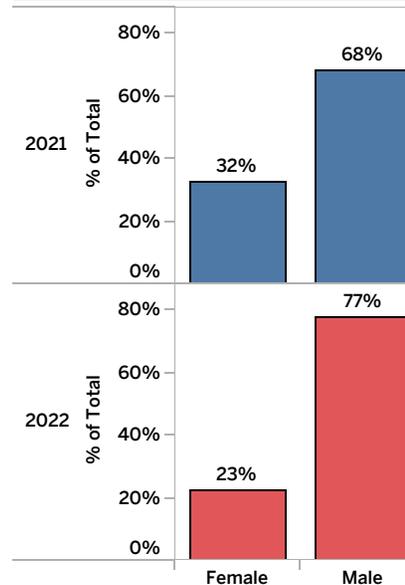
Fentanyl: Seventy-nine percent of overdose-related toxicology reports in 2022 have detected fentanyl, a synthetic opioid pain reliever that has been the main driver in the increased number of drug overdose deaths in Nashville.

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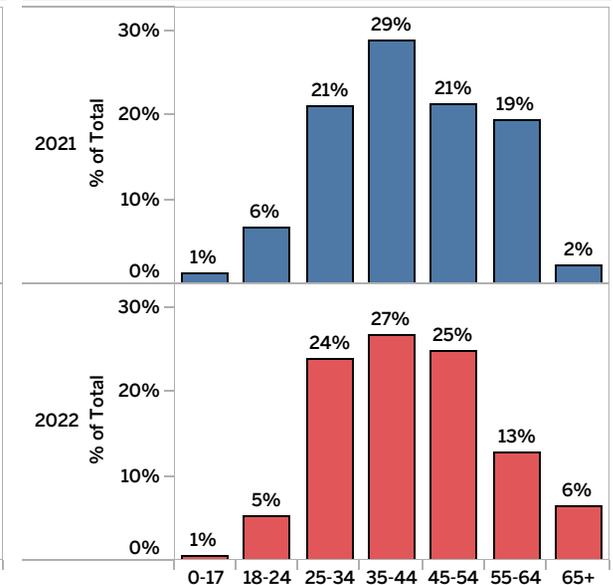
Emerging Substances: Fluorofentanyl, a fentanyl analog with reported potency similar to fentanyl, was first detected in Davidson County in the 3rd quarter of 2020. Xylazine, a drug used in veterinary medicine as a pain reliever and muscle relaxant, has been increasingly detected among suspected overdose deaths over the last 18 months.

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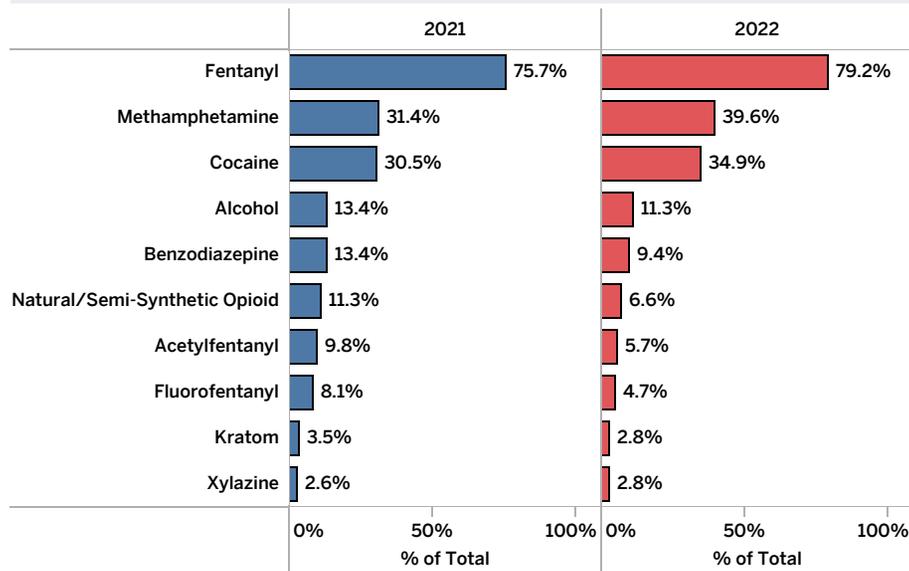
Sex, 2021-2022



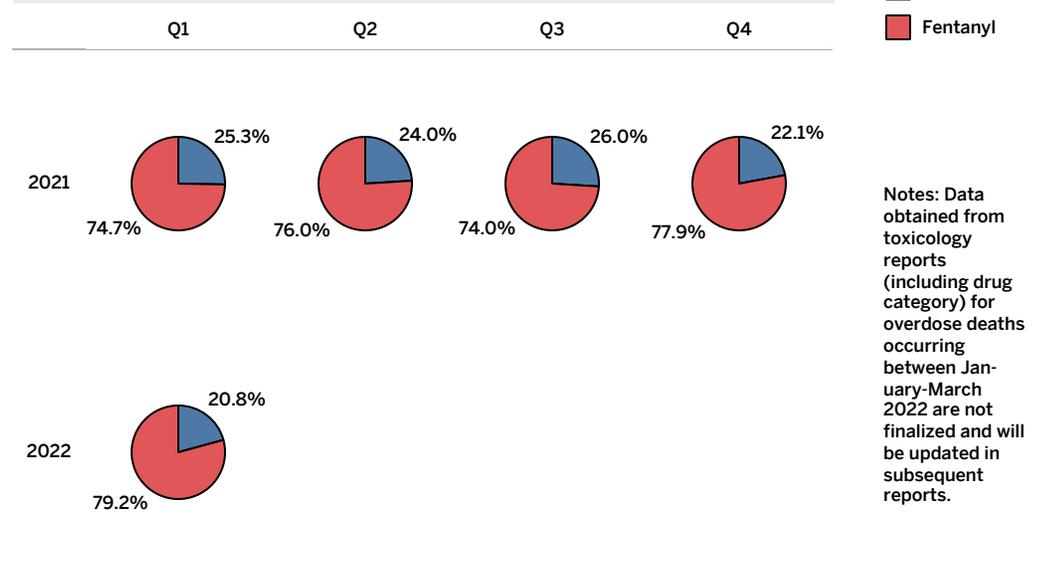
Age Group (years), 2021-2022



Substances Detected among Suspected Overdose Deaths, 2021-2022



Fentanyl Detection among Suspected Overdose Deaths by Quarter, 2021-2022



Notes: Data obtained from toxicology reports (including drug category) for overdose deaths occurring between January-March 2022 are not finalized and will be updated in subsequent reports.

Suspected Nonfatal Drug Overdose-related ED Visits

Notable Trends

Overdose-related ED Visits: During the first quarter of 2022, there were 527 suspected drug overdose-related ED visits captured by syndromic surveillance (definition on page 3), representing a 7% decrease when compared to the first quarter of 2021, where 568 visits were reported.

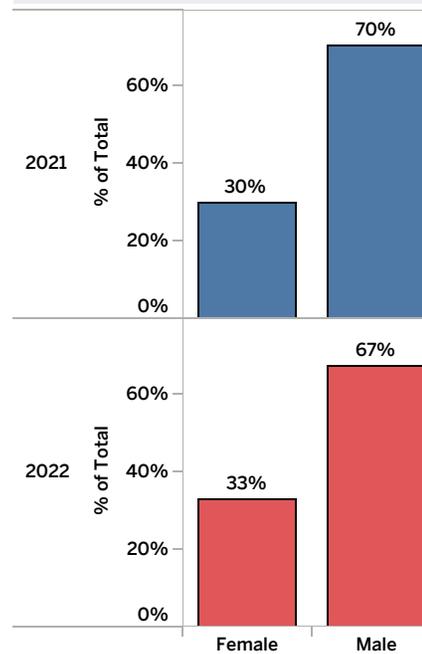
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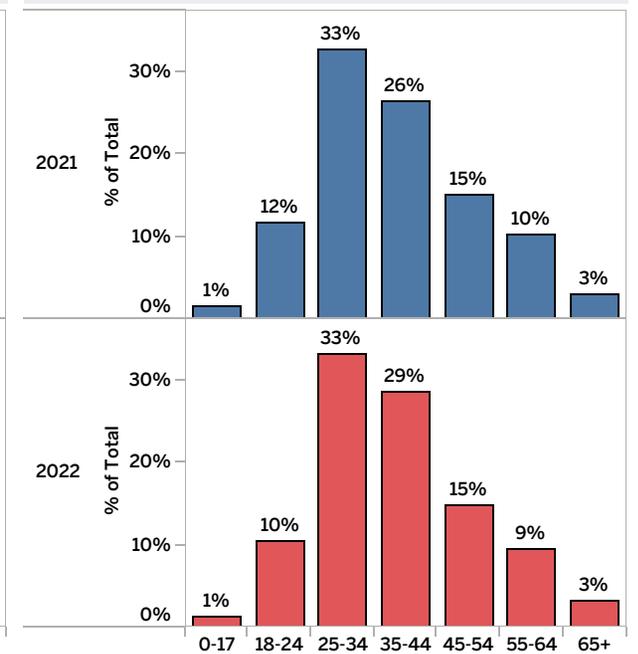
What is Syndromic Surveillance?

Per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): "Syndromic surveillance provides public health officials with a timely system for detecting, understanding, and monitoring health events. By tracking symptoms of patients in emergency departments—before a diagnosis is confirmed—public health can detect unusual levels of illness to determine whether a response is warranted. Syndromic data can serve as an early warning system for public health concerns such as flu outbreaks and have been used in responses for opioid overdoses." [1]

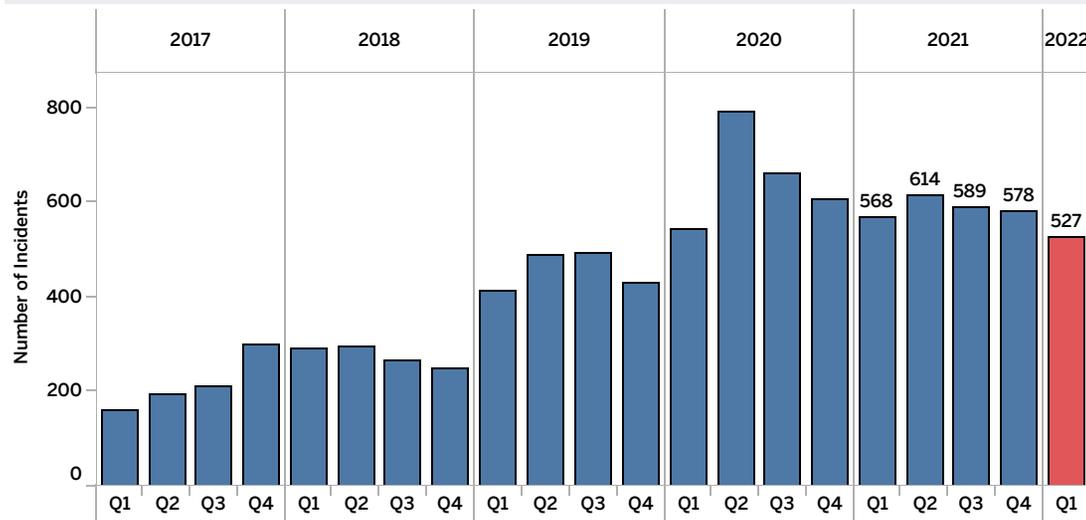
Sex, 2021-2022



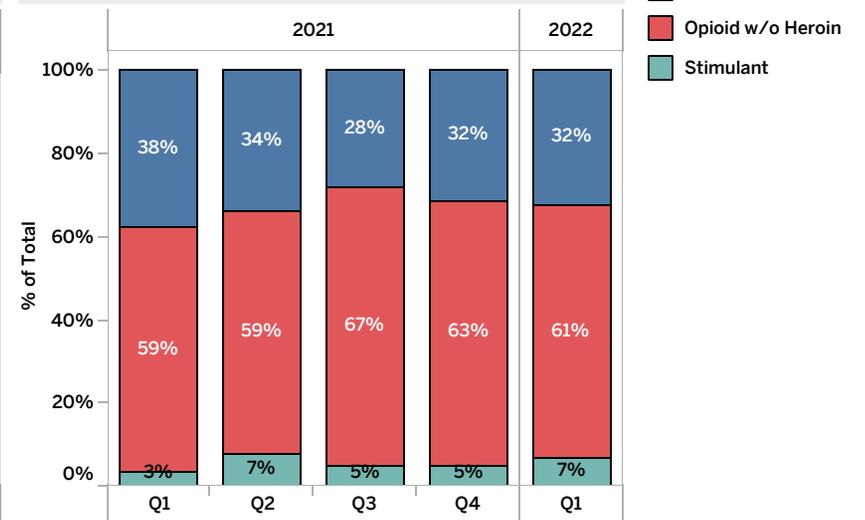
Age Group, 2021-2022



Suspected Nonfatal Drug Overdose-related ED Visits by Quarter - 2017-2022



Drug/Substance Category by Quarter, 2021-2022



Suspected Drug Overdoses Requiring NFD-EMS Response

2022 | January 1-March 31

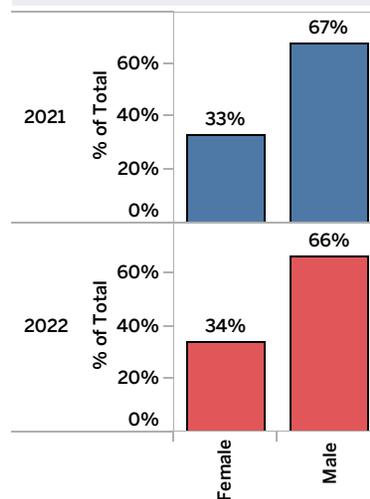
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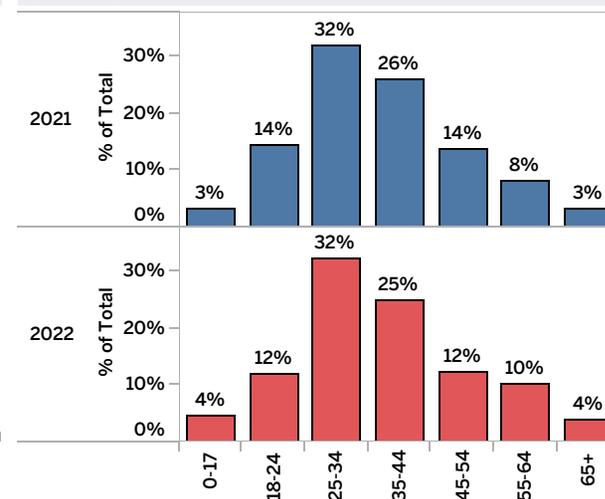
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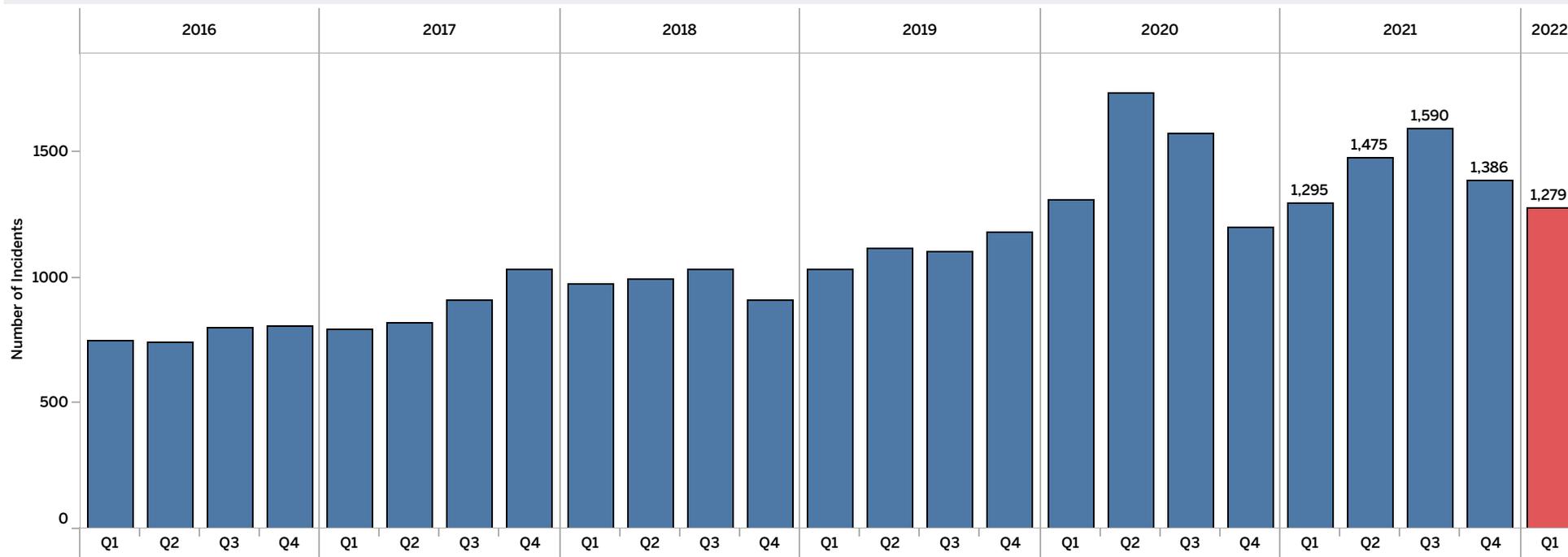
Sex, 2021-2022



Age Group (years), 2021-2022



Suspected Drug Overdoses Requiring NFD-EMS Response by Quarter - 2016-2022



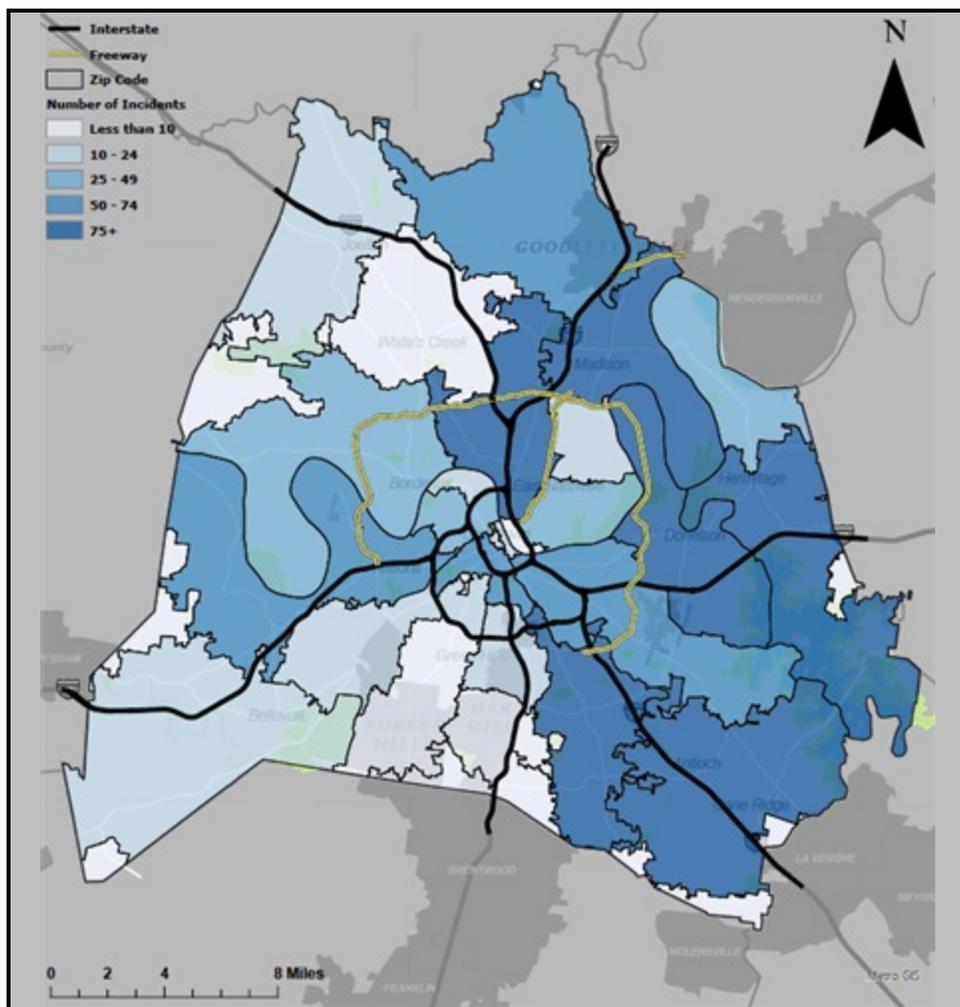
Geospatial Trends: Suspected Drug Overdoses Requiring NFD-EMS Response

Suspected Drug Overdoses Requiring NFD-EMS Response

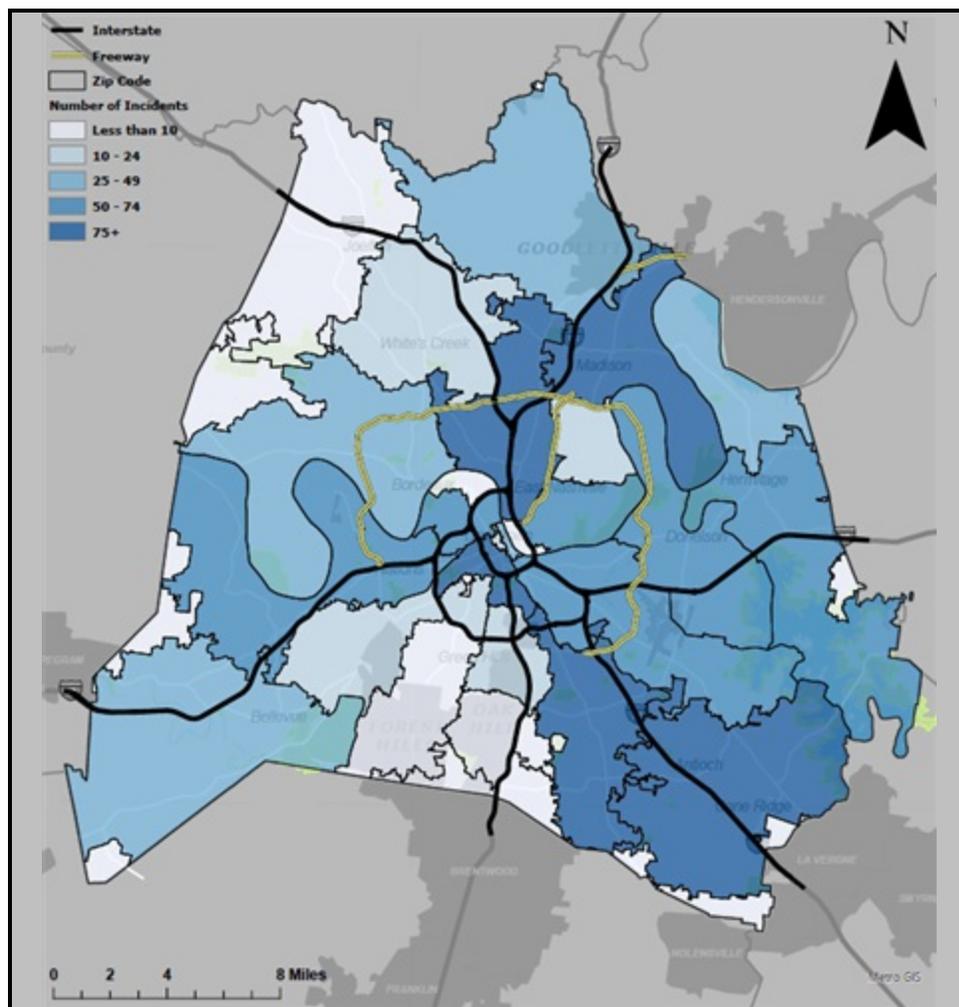
- In 2022, the majority of suspected drug overdose incidents have occurred in ZIP Codes 37211, 37115, 37207, 37203, and 37013.
- Compared to the first quarter of 2021, the largest increases in overdose incidents in 2022 have occurred in ZIP Codes 37201 (+8%), 37221 (+7%), and 37204 (+6%).

Number of Suspected Drug Overdoses Requiring NFD-EMS Response by Incident ZIP Code

2021: January-March



2022: January-March



Resources for the Public

Where to Find Help

Community Overdose Response Team

For those seeking treatment for drug addiction, the Community Overdose Response Team (CORT) can help. CORT is a free and confidential resource to help find drug and alcohol treatment for individuals who are at risk of an overdose. The service is offered free of charge regardless of health insurance status. The team works with an individual to determine the appropriate level of care (e.g., detox, residential, or outpatient treatment, etc.).

To make a referral or learn more about this resource for our community, call CORT at 615-687-1701.

Tennessee REDLINE

The purpose of the Tennessee REDLINE is to provide accurate, up-to-date alcohol, drug, problem gambling, and other addiction information and referrals to all citizens of Tennessee at their request even if you do not have health insurance.

- Phone: 1.800.889.9789 (toll free 24 hours/7 days)
- Website: <https://www.tn.gov/opioids/treatment/how-to-get-help.html>

Additional Information

Naloxone Training

- For naloxone training, call STARS Nashville at 615-393-6980 or visit <https://starsnashville.org/rops/>.

Overdose Signs

- Person is not responsive
- Fingertips or lips turn blue or grey
- Breathing is slow, shallow, or has stopped
- Person is gurgling or making snoring noises

What can you do if you see an opioid overdose?

- Call 911
- If you have naloxone, give the person naloxone and perform rescue breathing
- If no response after 2-3 minutes, give a second dose of naloxone
- Do not leave the person alone (help will arrive)
- If the person starts to breathe or becomes more alert, lay the person in the recovery position: put the person slightly on the left side so that their body is supported by a bent knee with their face turned to the side and bottom arm reaching out to stabilize the position

SPIKE Auto Text Program

Metro Public Health Department is collaborating with Partnership to End Addiction to implement the SPIKE Auto Text Program in Davidson County. The program will alert you when spikes in drug overdoses occur locally.

Text SPIKE to 855-9-OD-KNOW (855-963-5669) and follow the steps to get messages on your phone when overdose spikes occur. This service is FREE. You can learn more at <https://drugfree.org/spike/>.

Overdose Response Program – Drug Overdose Information

- Website: <https://www.nashville.gov/departments/health/drug-overdose-information>
- Contains various resources in English, Spanish, and Arabic.



Partnership to End Addiction is working with organizations in your community to alert you when spikes in drug overdoses occur locally. This knowledge can help you take action to engage and protect your loved ones struggling with addiction.

Why it matters: Spike alerts can prompt families and community members to:

- 1 Have discussions about seeking treatment and/or using substances more safely
- 2 Protect people you care about by getting naloxone and learning how to use it
- 3 Talk to friends or loved ones who are not using substances about the risks of use
- 4 Advocate for and support efforts in your community to prevent overdoses

Text SPIKE to
855-9-OD-KNOW
(855-963-5669)

and follow the steps to
get messages on your
phone when overdose
spikes occur.

How it works: Health and law enforcement officials can release a "spike alert" to the media in response to a pattern of drug overdoses within a community. Partnership to End Addiction's SPIKE Alerts by Text program informs you when these alerts are issued.



Learn more:
drugfree.org/spike
or scan QR code to sign up now

Partnership to End Addiction is a nonprofit working to transform how our nation addresses addiction. Learn more at drugfree.org.



Footnotes and Supplemental Information

Opioid.Response@nashville.gov | 615-340-0498

Technical Notes

There may be additional fatal/nonfatal drug overdoses reported over this time period in subsequent reports as incidents that occurred between January-March 2022 are not yet finalized. Percent change where the cumulative total is less than 20 were not included due to the instability of calculations.

Suspected Fatal Drug Overdoses

- Suspected fatal drug overdose data were accessed from the Death Investigation and Decedent Information (DIDI) database and ranged from 01/01/2016-03/31/2022. **Data represent deaths accessed from DIDI that are suspected to be drug overdose-related. Further, these deaths have occurred within Davidson County; cases are included in this total regardless of resident status.** This particular mortality indicator is utilized in order to demonstrate the overall burden on first response/healthcare/forensic science efforts involved in addition to the overall magnitude of the overdose epidemic. As such, counts reported for this metric will likely differ from overdose death counts provided by other agencies which typically report deaths among county residents.

Suspected Nonfatal Drug Overdose-related ED Visits

- Nonfatal drug overdose data were extracted from ESSENCE-TN and ranged from 01/01/2017-03/31/2022.
- Nonfatal drug overdose ED visits were captured by syndromic surveillance (ESSENCE-TN) by the following hospitals:
 - Nashville General Hospital, Saint Thomas Midtown Hospital, Saint Thomas West Hospital, TriStar Centennial Medical Center, TriStar Skyline Medical Center, TriStar Southern Hills Medical Center, TriStar Summit Medical Center, and Vanderbilt University Medical Center.
- Updated query language was utilized to capture nonfatal drug overdoses reported to ESSENCE in August 2020. This query was retroactively applied to previous time periods.
- ICD-10-CM diagnosis injury codes, in addition to chief complaint keyword queries, were used to capture nonfatal drug overdoses:
 - Opioid: T40.0, F11.1, F11.2, F11.9
 - Heroin: T40.1
 - Other opioid: T40.2
 - Methadone: T40.3
 - Other synthetic narcotic: T40.4
 - Cocaine: T40.5
 - Other/unspecified narcotic: T40.6
 - Amphetamine: T43.62
- Drug Category (page 3)
 - Opioids excluding Heroin: T40.0, T40.2-T40.4, T40.6, F11.1, F11.2, F11.9
 - Heroin: T40.1
 - Stimulant: T40.5, T43.62

Suspected Drug Overdoses Requiring NFD-EMS Response

- Suspected drug overdose data were provided by the Nashville Fire Department EMS Database and ranged from 01/01/2016-03/31/2022.

Sources

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. What is Syndromic Surveillance? (September 2021). Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/nssp/overview.html>, accessed on April 12, 2022.